

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 14 - 16th December 2022



Happy Christmas

Mr Neves
Executive Headteacher

On Sunday we celebrated the third Sunday in Advent - known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means rejoice we were invited to share the joy of the impending Christmas season. What we are looking forward to celebrating is summed up in Luke's gospel:

At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown. Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

So Joseph and Mary ended up in Bethlehem because of a census. The most recent census in this country was in 2021 and one result of the survey made headline news recently:

Less than half of England and Wales population identifies as Christian
The percentage of people saying they had no religion jumped from 25.2% in 2011 to over a third in 2021 (37.2%).
The Independent 29th November 2022

Britain has for many years been considered a Christian country, with a majority of people identifying with a Christian faith. However, this appears to have changed. Nevertheless, celebrating Christmas seems to be as popular as ever. I reflected on this statistic in assembly this week. I shared a photo that was typical of the news coverage of this item: the inside of a church with a tiny congregation and empty pews. The newspapers were obviously suggesting that this was how the impact of these statistics would be seen. I, in turn, suggested that there is more to Christianity than just that. For there are several tasks for the Church - the people of faith; not just going to church. I like the succinct description presented by my Parish Priest some years ago. He said the core tasks of the Catholic Church are: worshipping God, care for the poor and evangelisation. That quality of spreading the teachings of Jesus, in word and deed, and looking after the needy, putting others first and loving one's neighbour are all key qualities, and ones that we promote and see in action at St Mary's every day. I hope they will always be the bedrock of our school community. May I wish you all a wonderful Christmas!

Loving God

We thank you for all the blessings in our lives - the love of our families, our friends - and the things we may easily take for granted - a peaceful environment in which to live and the basic essentials of life.

We thank you for our school community and all who play their part in its development. May we celebrate the joy of our anticipation of the birth of your son as we each continue to love one another, to respect each person's dignity and to flourish as you had intended.

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord

Amen

UPCOMING EVENTS



Friday 16th December 2022
Term Ends 1pm for Students

Wednesday 4th January 2023
School Re-Opens
Students Return to School

Thursday 5th January 2023



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Snow Days!



An aerial photograph of St Mary's,
taken on Monday after the snow fall!



TERM DATES REMINDER

Spring Term

Pupils Return to School on Wednesday 4th January 2023

Half-Term Week

Monday—Friday, 13th-17th February 2023

End of Spring Term

Friday 31st March 2023

Pupils Return to School on Monday 17th April 2023



Advent Carol Service

On Thursday 15th December we held our annual Carol Service in school.



It was a huge success, with performances from the choir and the student orchestra.



Overall, the evening was a wonderful occasion of prayer and music as part of our Advent Journey.



Christmas Dinner at St Mary's

Students were invited to the St Mary's Christmas Dinner on 14th December. Everyone enjoyed the festive lunch time celebrations.



Christmas Themed Food Tech...

Some of our Year 9 students enjoyed a Christmas themed food tech lesson this week.

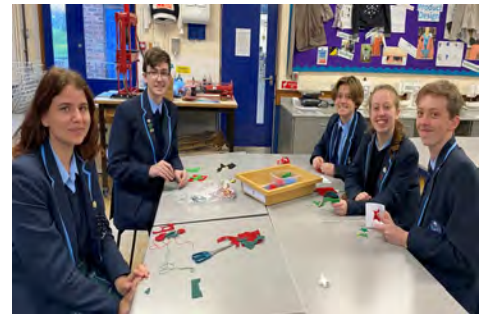
They were making mincemeat cinnamon swirls!



Year 10 Reward Treat ~ Christmas

As a school, we wanted to celebrate the students commitment and effort to their studies and learning this term by inviting them to attend a Year Group Celebration Activity. Form Tutors chose 5-6 students from their form classes to recognise their achievements. Thirty of the Year 10 students had a Christmas afternoon of treats!

The chosen activity this term was Christmas themed. Students were biscuit decorating and crafting tree decorations. It took place during the school day in the Art and DT room.



Year 9 Reward Event ~ Party Games

After being nominated by their Form Tutors, in recognition of their hard work, effort and dedication at school, some of the Year 9 students were invited to a "Party Games" reward afternoon.

During this time they had a chance to play some classic board games (and some new ones), whilst enjoying a variety of treats.

Mr Wright and Miss Hayles look forward to arranging another event at the end of the Spring term, so if you missed out this time there will be another opportunity.



KS3 Enrichment Day ~ Rescheduled



Due to the Snow Days and school closure this week, the **KS3 Enrichment Day will be rescheduled to take place in the new Spring Term.**

KS3 Students will be able to enjoy a wonderful, creative day, separate from their usual timetable on **Monday 23rd January**, as part of their Enrichment Day.

PE Extra-Curricular Clubs



PE Extra-Curricular Timetable Spring Term

| Club | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Senior |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Football | Monday (Courts – wear trainers) | Monday | Monday | Monday | |
| Netball | Friday | Tuesday | Tuesday | Tuesday | Tuesday |

All Clubs run from 3.15-4.15pm

You must organise your own transport home from school



MFL Department News...



Italian Film Afternoon

Friday 9th December

It has been great to see so many students attending our recent MFL Film Afternoons.

So far we have held film screenings of “Le Petit Nicolas” in French and “Luca” in Italian. Students not only seem to have enjoyed the pizza that has been on offer, but also have discussed the benefits that watching a foreign language film has for your language skills.

Well done to all those who have attended!

Our next film afternoon will be a Spanish film next term so look out for the next date to book your tickets!



Dylan 7T:

I went to the French film because I wanted to learn more French – and also that there was some takeaway pizza that we could have. It has really improved my French and I would definitely go again!

Evie 7T:

I went to the French film because I wanted to learn more French and maybe be able to speak fluently in the language. I enjoyed the film and have become better at French since then!



The Season of Advent

**Sunday 18th December,
Fourth Sunday of Advent**

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Saviour.
The fourth candle represents Peace and is called the "Angel's Candle."

It reminds us of the message of the angels:
"Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

<https://www.stmarys.net/vacancies>